United Nations E/ICEF/2008/21

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 July 2008

Original: English

For discussion

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
Second regular session 2008
15-18 September 2008
Item 13 of the provisional agenda*

Report on the evaluation function and major evaluations in UNICEF**

Summary

This report has been prepared in accordance with the new evaluation policy (E/ICEF/2008/4) and Executive Board decision 2008/14. It provides baseline information on the current state of the evaluation function in UNICEF at country, regional and global levels and strategic orientations for its strengthening.

The report also contains a summary of major evaluations conducted at country, regional and global levels. The information on evaluations at the regional and country levels is based on reports prepared by the Regional Directors.

* E/ICEF/2008/16.
** Submission of this document was delayed because of the need for internal consultation.

08-42501 (E) 060808

Introduction

1. The purpose of the evaluation function, as stated in the evaluation policy, is to ensure that UNICEF has timely, strategically focused and objective information on the performance of policies, programmes and initiatives to produce better results for children and women. It fosters institutional learning and strengthens evidence-based decision-making and advocacy, transparency, coherence and effectiveness.

2. The evaluation function of UNICEF is decentralized. Most of the organization's evaluation work is carried out at the country level, with regional offices providing oversight and support for evaluations undertaken by the country offices. Regional offices also conduct thematic evaluations related to their regional strategies and organize multi-country evaluations. Headquarters undertakes evaluations relating to their areas of responsibility, with support from the Evaluation Office. The Evaluation Office provides functional leadership and systemic management of the evaluation system. In addition, it conducts independent evaluations, mostly at the global level, and also undertakes joint evaluations in partnership with the United Nations system, together with programme countries and donor countries, and with other partners.

3. This report describes the evaluation function within the context of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) for 2006-2009 (E/ICEF/2005/11). The MTSP indicates that UNICEF will focus on six main areas in strengthening its evaluation function:

(a) National capacity-building and strengthened national leadership in country-level evaluations;

(b) Strengthened evaluation within the United Nations system and with other partners;

(c) Evaluation in humanitarian crises;

(d) Evaluations related to MTSP focus areas, strategies and operational effectiveness;

(e) Strengthened organizational capacity in evaluation;

(f) Heightened management attention to the evaluation function.

4. Annex II of the MTSP contains the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (IMEF), which details various evaluative exercises required to assess UNICEF performance against the MTSP. The IMEF is currently being reviewed as part of the midterm review of the MTSP 2006-2009.

5. The present report is structured as follows: Section I describes main developments during the past year that are related to the priority areas for the strengthening of the evaluation function as described in the MTSP. Section II presents the current state of the evaluation function in UNICEF in terms of trends in the allocation of human and financial resources and the evolution of the quantity and quality of evaluations. Section III indicates measures to strengthen the evaluation function at country and regional levels and at headquarters. Section IV presents findings and recommendations of major evaluations undertaken in the different regions and by the Evaluation Office during the past year, and, wherever possible, includes management responses to these findings and recommendations.

I. Evaluation within the context of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan 2006-2009

6. UNICEF continues to assume a lead role in evaluating capacity-building at country and regional levels and in supporting national leadership in country-level evaluations. UNICEF has led the development and delivery of training programmes and courses organized through the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) that specifically benefited both United Nations staff and national evaluators in programme countries. As in the past, UNICEF partnered with regional and national evaluation associations for various activities on evaluation capacity development.[1]

7. Good examples of strengthened national leadership in country-level evaluations are the joint country-led evaluation of child-focused policies in the social protection sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the country programme evaluation conducted in Ecuador. UNICEF also actively contributes to the preparation of the country-led evaluation, to be implemented in 2008, of the role and contribution of the United Nations system for South Africa. Since 2007, UNICEF has played a major coordinating role in the evaluability assessments conducted by UNEG of the Delivering as One country pilots.

8. UNICEF continues to actively contribute to the work of UNEG in several other ways. Building on the adoption of norms and standards for evaluation in 2005, UNICEF plays a leading role in a number of task forces aiming to professionalize the evaluation function in the United Nations system, e.g., through the development of professional standards, codes of conduct and guidelines for evaluators and by conducting peer reviews. Training courses are being developed, in cooperation with the United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC), for evaluators in UNICEF, the United Nations system and among national counterparts.

9. As far as evaluation in humanitarian crises is concerned, a major contribution of UNICEF has been the development of standards and guidelines for real-time evaluations, with a view to improve emergency preparedness and response. This activity was implemented in close cooperation with the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). Inter-agency real-time evaluations have been conducted in Mozambique, Niger and Pakistan. UNICEF also plays a major role in the coordination of the evaluation of humanitarian reform instruments, such as the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and the cluster approach.

10. The programmatic evaluations and research projects included in the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (IMEF), scheduled for 2006-2007, have largely been completed or are currently under implementation.[2] A number of additional major evaluations were conducted by the Evaluation Office on the corporate performance in gender mainstreaming, on the supply function and on the human resource management in UNICEF. Concerning programmes that are part of the response to the Indian Ocean tsunami, there have been syntheses of lessons learned, based on country and regional evaluations conducted in 2005-2006. A review of lessons learned from construction programmes supported by UNICEF in

[1] Details are provided in section III of this report.

[2] See annex I.

tsunami-affected areas is currently under way. A series of impact evaluations have been initiated for Indonesia, Maldives and Sri Lanka.

II. Current state of the evaluation function in UNICEF

A. Trends in the allocation of human and financial resources

Monitoring and evaluation staff

11. The 2006 report on the evaluation function presented to the Executive Board noted major increases over a 2002 baseline in the numbers of professional monitoring and evaluation staff.[3] Since then, this trend has continued (with significantly more national professionals) and an improving gender balance (50 per cent of the growth in posts was met by female professionals).

12. As of February 2008, professional posts at all levels that included 'evaluation' in the job title had incumbents in 85 country offices. Table 1 shows changes between February 2006 and March 2008 in the number of monitoring and evaluation officers at level 3 posts and higher, with a breakdown by gender.[4]

Table 1
Number of monitoring and evaluation officers at level 3 posts and higher, 2006-2008

	2006	*2008*	*Change (%)*
International professionals	45	50	+11%
National professionals	23	40	+74%
Total professionals	68	90	+32%
Professionals in field offices	56	76	+36%
Female professionals	27	38	+41%

13. In practice, evaluation represents a small proportion of the duties for many of these staff, as they are also responsible for planning, surveys, statistics and policy analysis.

14. Regional offices have recruited regional coordinators for the multiple indicator cluster surveys (MICS), which should allow regional monitoring and evaluation officers to pay more attention to evaluation and research.

15. At headquarters, the Evaluation Office had six professional and three support positions in 2005. In 2006-2007, there were eight professional and three support positions. For 2008-2009, there will be nine professionals, two junior professionals and three support posts, with the hope of adding one or more professionals from other resources support. In addition, several parts of the Programme Group have increased their internal evaluation and research staffing.

[3] E/ICEF/2006/15, Report on the evaluation function in UNICEF, 5 April 2006.
[4] Level 3 is the desired minimum level to ensure systemic competence.

Allocation of financial resources

Country and regional levels

16. Starting in 2006, the programme coding system was refined to capture evaluation spending more accurately. As this coding is relatively new, the figures on spending on evaluation and related activities at country and regional levels presented in Table 2 may be indicative.

Table 2
Indication of spending on evaluation and related activities at country and regional levels (2006-2007)

	(In millions of United States [US] dollars)		
	2006	*2007*	*Trend 2006-2007*
Spending on evaluation	7.97	10.13	+27%
Comparator: Overall UNICEF programme spending	2 120.00	2 520.00	+18.9%
Related spending: analysis, research	27.90	34.14	+22.3%
Related spending: data collection, databases, surveys and statistics	24.70	25.97	+5.1%

17. The average amount spent per completed evaluation was $32,137 in 2006 and $41,012 in 2007, representing an increase of 27.6 per cent.

18. The Board has requested information on the sources of funding for evaluation. Table 3 summarizes the funding sources of spent amounts at the country and regional levels for 2006-2007.

Table 3
Sources of funding for amounts spent for evaluation, 2006-2007

Source of funding	*(In millions of US dollars)*	*Percentage*
Regular resources	7.0	38.7%
Other resources — non-emergency	7.9	43.7%
Other resources — emergency	3.2	17.6%
Total	**18.1**	**100.0%**

Headquarters level

19. The automated financial system used at headquarters does not capture the spending on evaluation and related activities by divisions other than the Evaluation Office. Table 4 summarizes the financial resources made available to and used by the Evaluation Office. However, these resources represent only a part of the spending on evaluation at headquarters level.

Table 4
Evaluation Office spending, 2006-2007

	(In millions of US dollars)		
	2006	*2007*	*2006-2007*
Support budget — staff and related costs	1.579	1.595	3.174
Regular resources budget	0.336	0.467	0.803
Other resources ceiling — except tsunami	2.500	2.500	5.000
Spending on evaluations — all except tsunami	1.300	0.759	2.059
Spending on evaluations — tsunami	0.616	0.484	1.100

20. Spending at the headquarters level on evaluations not related to the tsunami was $2,059,000 during the biennium.

Table 5
Evaluation Office allocations and available resources, 2008-2009

	(In millions of US dollars)		
	2008	*2009*	*2008-2009*
Support budget — staff and related costs	1.743[a]	1.821[a]	3.564
Regular resources budget	0.95[a]	0.95[a]	1.900
2008-2009 other resources authorized ceiling			7.500[a]
2008-2009 available OR — all except tsunami			2.186[b]
2008-2009 available OR — tsunami			1.225[b]

[a] Allocations for the biennium 2008-2009 approved by the Executive Board.
[b] As of April 2008. An update will be presented at the time of the Executive Board session.

21. The Evaluation Office has seen a doubling of its regular resources for the biennium 2008-2009. To a large extent, these resources are used to provide systemic support to the evaluation function at all levels. Moreover, external evaluations are expensive; additional funding would be required to carry out more than one major evaluation per year. To conduct global evaluations, the Evaluation Office is largely dependent on funding from other internal stakeholders. It is expected that there will be additional financial partnerships with the programme group in the next biennium to meet IMEF commitments and other objectives.

B. Trends in numbers of evaluations and improvement of their quality

22. In compliance with the request of the Executive Board to be more selective in conducting evaluations, UNICEF reduced the number of evaluations by 15.5 per cent from 2004-2005 to 2006-2007, continuing an earlier trend that saw an 18 per cent reduction between 2002 and 2005.

Table 6
Trends in numbers of evaluations (2004-2007)

	Evaluations	*Studies and surveys*
2004	295	685
2005	291	649
Total (2004-2005)	**586**	**1 334**
2006	248	732
2007	247	752
Total (2006-2007)	**495**	**1 484**
Change (2006-2007 versus 2004-2005)	**-91 (-15.5%)**	**+150 (+11.2%)**

23. The average UNICEF country office conducts 1.5 to 2 evaluations and 5 studies and surveys per year, permitting most major programmes components to be evaluated once during a programme cycle, an important requisite for strategic decision-making and a requirement of the revised evaluation policy.

24. An analysis of the number of evaluations conducted in the five MTSP focus areas offers some insight into the evaluation function and its strategic links to achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Table 7
Evaluations conducted in the focus areas of the UNICEF MTSP (2006-2009) in 2006-2007

Focus area	*Number of evaluations*	*Percentage of total evaluations*	*Programmes/themes*
Young Child Survival and Development	138	28%	Health; immunization; nutrition; and WES
Basic Education and Gender Equality	96	19%	Education; early childhood development
HIV/AIDS	66	13%	HIV/AIDS; youth and adolescents; life skills
Child Protection	61	12%	Child protection
Policy Advocacy and Partnerships	38	8%	Social policy; gender
Other evaluations	96	20%	
Total	**495**	**100%**	

25. The utility and use of evaluations depend to a great extent on their quality; accordingly, the improvement of the quality of evaluations is an organizational goal. UNICEF has developed evaluation reporting standards to serve as a transparent tool for quality assessment of evaluation reports produced at all levels. The standards are used to assess and rate evaluations for inclusion in the UNICEF Evaluation and

Research Database,[5] which serves as a learning tool. The UNICEF standards draw from, and complement, the *Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the United Nations System* (2005), published by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).

26. The percentage of evaluation reports rated 'satisfactory' or higher has increased from 67 per cent (2000-2002) to 84 per cent (2006). This means the rate of unsatisfactory evaluations has dropped by half and shows that quality-enhancement efforts are taking hold, even though there is still much room for further improvement.

III. Strengthening the evaluation function in UNICEF

A. Monitoring and evaluation at the decentralized levels

Overall efforts to strengthen the evaluation function

27. Some regions are preparing overarching strategies, incorporating the elements necessary for strengthening the evaluation function:

(a) Central and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS): improved management attention to evaluation; technical evaluation competencies; and knowledge management of evaluation findings;

(b) The Americas and Caribbean Regional Office (TACRO): capacity strengthening; building a United Nations evaluation network; improved use of evaluation findings; preparation of management responses to those findings; partnerships with United Nations agencies and academic institutions;

(c) Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO): resource allocation; linkages with other stakeholders; strategic planning; and management response;

(d) Middle East and North Africa (MENARO): annual reviews of evaluation plans of country offices, identification of competent evaluators; and quality assurance on terms of references.

Strengthening the evaluation capacity of staff and national counterparts

28. Regional and country offices have supported the organization of the UNEG-UNSSC introduction course on evaluation at the regional level. For example, the West and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO) helped organize the course for francophone Africa, held entirely in French (Mali, April 2008) and TACRO did the same for the Spanish-speaking countries in its region (Panama, March 2008). ESARO has also organized this course (Rwanda, March 2008). Ninety-four UNICEF staff members from regional and country offices have attended the introduction course. More specific capacity-building measures include efforts in the CEE/CIS region to promote the use of policy evidence produced by national monitoring and evaluation systems. The South Asia Regional Office (ROSA) continues its collaboration with the World Bank Institute to establish evaluation

[5] The UNICEF Evaluation and Research Database can be accessed online (http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/index.html).

training in South Asian academic institutions as a sustainable capacity-development measure.

Guidance, technical support and quality assurance

29. Regional offices are making strong efforts in providing technical assistance and quality assurance to country offices. For example, WCARO is planning to develop and implement a quality assurance system for evaluations. The East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO) and ROSA have created an Evaluation and Knowledge Management Cluster, headed by a senior evaluation adviser, in order to assist country offices in ensuring a higher quality of evaluations.

30. ESARO has created a technical assistance mechanism through which prompt and appropriate support on monitoring and evaluation is provided to country offices. Country offices submit requests that are entered online and responded to either directly by the regional office or by referrals to appropriate consultants or research institutions. United Nations country teams can send requests for joint support to the regional directors team secretariat. In a further effort towards quality assurance of evaluations, the regional office is regularly reviewing terms of reference, and is planning, in consultation with country offices, to establish a regional evaluation terms of reference review panel to ensure wider consultation for quality assurance.

31. The CEE/CIS regional office set up in 2008 — on an experimental basis — a regional monitoring and evaluation facility, an innovative and client-oriented system delivering quality and real-time technical assistance. The facility delivers 13 services, including access to preselected consultants; technical helpdesk; country-level training (tailored to country-specific needs); and real-time feedback on draft evaluation terms of reference and reports. Following the recommendations of the Executive Board on the new evaluation policy, the system will also incorporate the tracking of management responses for major evaluations.

Exchange of knowledge and good practices as well as evaluation capacity development

32. Sharing of experiences is an important feature of the work of the regional offices. ESARO has forged partnerships among country offices for shared evaluations, including an assessment of MICS nutrition data quality, and an evaluation of the impact of social cash transfers. The pooling of resources and use of external reviews has led to higher-quality work. ROSA is providing leadership within the region by improving access to high-quality evaluations for programme improvement, including a review of maternal and neonatal mortality. CEE/CIS has commissioned regional thematic evaluations of the child care and juvenile justice systems to provide evidence to Governments and other key stakeholders on what works for policy reform for children.

33. Several regional offices have supported the establishment of both regional and national evaluation networks and evaluation institutions. A database of all potential and credible evaluators is being established in the CEE/CIS and MENA regions. The CEE/CIS regional office worked with various partners in activities related to knowledge and exchange of good practices, including the World Bank, the International Development Evaluation Association, the International Programme Evaluation Network and the European Evaluation Society. EAPRO and ROSA have assumed a leading role in the establishment and maintenance of the inter-agency

United Nations Evaluation Development Group for Asia and the Pacific. Since 2005, WCARO has supported the creation or the reinforcement of national monitoring and evaluation networks in Mauritania and Senegal, as well as in Mali and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

B. Role and contribution of the Evaluation Office in strengthening the evaluation function

34. The Evaluation Office at New York headquarters provides oversight and systemic leadership of the evaluation function of UNICEF. The evaluation policy stipulates that leadership is provided in the development of approaches and methodologies for policy, strategy, programme, project, institutional and thematic evaluations. The Evaluation Office also issues corporate guidance on evaluation practice, provides quality assurance and reports on the implementation of accepted evaluation recommendations from global thematic and institutional evaluations.

35. To improve evaluation quality, the Evaluation Office is investing a major share of its increased regular resources in new initiatives to ensure that evaluation staff has the required competencies. Initiatives include a global recruitment exercise to generate a pool of quality monitoring and evaluation applicants, as well as testing of existing monitoring and evaluation staff, and the development of Web-based self-training packages. A global helpdesk will be created in New York, including a renewed Intranet portal, a reference desk for accessing experts and a facility for building up a 'community of practice' to stimulate support and exchange among monitoring and evaluation staff.

36. UNICEF is an active member of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and contributes to the promotion of accountability and coherence of the United Nations and international evaluation systems. One major UNEG milestone with regard to the harmonization and professionalization of the evaluation function in the United Nations system is the development of a core training programme in evaluation. UNEG will partner with UNSSC to develop and deliver a proposed UNEG-UNSSC evaluation training programme.[6]

37. Since 2001, the Evaluation Office has developed a methodology to evaluate country programmes in cooperation with field offices and national partners and with support provided by the Department for International Development (DFID) of the Government of the United Kingdom. Seven pilot country programme evaluations have been concluded.[7] In its decision 2008/4 of February 2008, the Executive Board called on UNICEF to continue to conduct evaluations of operations at the country level in close consultation with the national Government and to assist governments in the development of national evaluation capacities. Such country-level evaluations are increasingly conducted within the inter-agency context; examples include the evaluation concerning the role and contribution of the United Nations system for South Africa (in the country itself, within the African regional context and at the global level), and the evaluation of the 'Delivering as One' country pilots.

[6] For more information, please see the UNSSC website (http://www.unssc.org).

[7] Evaluations have been concluded for the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Mauritius, Morocco, Pacific Island countries and Peru.

38. In cooperation with the UNICEF Office of Internal Audit, the Evaluation Office is developing a new tool, called Programme Performance Assessment, to measure the contribution of country offices to national development and humanitarian efforts. The approach is being developed in a number of pilot countries and will be reviewed after 18 months.

IV. Major evaluations[8]

A. Country and regional levels

Central and Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States

Joint country-led evaluation of child-focused policies in the social protection sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina

39. The evaluation of child-focused policies implemented within the 2004-2007 national Mid-Term Development Strategy (MTDS) of Bosnia and Herzegovina aimed at informing the design of new national social protection policies and assessing the contribution and future role of UNICEF. At the request of the Government, an assessment of the performance of the donor community was also included.

40. The evaluation showed that the national MTDS provided a good platform for national and international stakeholders to engage around priority issues, such as social protection. However, it also revealed that the social protection system was affected by a number of constraints related to governance. Policies for the social protection sector were defined at the district and municipality levels but lacked strong national coordination; this prevented a clear identification of effective entry-points to influence sector-wide policy.

41. The UNICEF-supported interventions, such as the child protection system reform at central and local levels, created a momentum for driving policy change. UNICEF support to strengthen feedback of local experiences to central-level policymakers through the municipal management boards was assessed positively.

42. The Government took the opportunity of the joint country-led evaluation to also assess external donors' support to governance. The evaluation revealed that a number of surveys were funded by donors as part of the national MTDS process to address the lack of statistical data on poverty. However, the evaluation concluded that, donors would need to support the Government to lead in policy analysis, data collection and monitoring.

43. UNICEF played an appropriate and relevant role in strengthening national monitoring and evaluation systems. By successfully engaging government partners at the state level, the emphasis shifted to a more demand-led approach and, consequently, strengthened the policy dialogue, especially regarding social protection for children. The potential of UNICEF for furthering dialogue at the policy level, was, however, not fully recognized by all partners.

[8] To enhance independence and impartiality, evaluations are usually conducted by external consultants and research institutions, which include to the greatest possible extent those from programme countries. Evaluation reports can be accessed online through the UNICEF Evaluation and Research Database (http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/index_43539.html).

44. Recommendations from the joint country-led evaluation are already used for the preparation of the new country development and social inclusion strategies this year. In addition to focusing on the needs of families with children, the Directorate of Economic Planning will also strengthen the monitoring system for these strategies as recommended by the joint country-led evaluation. In response to the recommendation to develop a more efficient aid coordination mechanism, an Aid Coordination Unit is being created within the Ministry of Finance.

Regional thematic evaluation of the contribution of UNICEF to child care system reform in Central Asia

45. UNICEF has supported child care system reforms in Central Asia since the mid-1990s. Thanks mainly to the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, launched by the Government of Japan and the United Nations Secretariat, work intensified in 2004-2007. The objective of the evaluation was to analyze and monitor the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the ongoing child care system reforms and the contribution of UNICEF.

46. The evaluation was carried out by an independent consultancy firm over a period of six months in 2007-2008 in five countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Missions were carried out in each country, and involved interviews, focus groups, discussions with key stakeholders and site observations.

47. The findings showed that the reform of the child care system had gained momentum and was still in progress. In many countries, governments took action to reform policies and approved new primary legislation on child care. However, secondary legislation and regulations were far less advanced. There were some concerns about funding to implement the planned changes in public administration. It was noted that, in some instances, programmes had begun to address the question of financial sustainability at the highest level. In Kazakhstan, changes in the budget process in the interest of children were discussed, and in Kyrgyzstan, UNICEF successfully negotiated with the European Union on including significant budget support for the planned nationwide rollout of Family and Child Support Departments.

48. The evaluation stressed the need to ensure that resource planning becomes an integral part of policy processes. This would entail working on major cross-sectoral issues, such as decentralization policy, employment opportunities and the budget process. Furthermore, UNICEF should develop closer links with partners who have a comparative advantage in economic development.

49. UNICEF should consider supporting Governments in regular monitoring of policy implementation and identify resources or liaise with other development partners who can ensure that this monitoring capacity gap is filled. UNICEF should also help Governments to promote systematic analytical activities and to improve national analytical capacity on child care issues, among both government and non-government domestic stakeholders.

50. The evaluation highlighted several factors that contributed to successful deinstitutionalization in different countries: (a) the need to focus on the entire policy cycle, from policy development to policy implementation and monitoring; (b) the provision of alternative employment options to staff of residential child care

institutions; (c) the availability of alternative services for children; (d) the management of pilots in both favourable and unfavourable environments; and (e) public support for deinstitutionalization.

51. Evaluation findings and recommendations will be used to inform future reform efforts and also to further develop synergies with key partners (the Asian Development Bank, the European Union and the World Bank) and the public administration reform processes of Governments, as part of national poverty reduction strategies. A high-level consultation on child care system reform with Governments, key donors, regional experts and neighbouring countries is scheduled for early 2009 and aims to accelerate and refocus reform strategies based on the evaluation findings and recommendations.

East Asia and the Pacific

Evaluation of the UNICEF response in the emergency and initial recovery phases of the 2007 earthquake and tsunami disaster in the Solomon Islands

52. On the morning of 2 April 2007, a large earthquake and subsequent tsunami destroyed or severely damaged 304 villages across the Solomon Islands. The disaster killed 52 people and directly affected 36,500 more, around half of whom were children.

53. Alongside other partners, UNICEF acted swiftly in support of the Solomon Islands Government. The effort represented the first large-scale emergency response of UNICEF in the Pacific. After immediately deploying emergency staff to the country and initiating an international funding appeal, UNICEF consulted with Governments and drew up a detailed Emergency Management Plan based on its Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies.

54. The evaluation found that the overall response of UNICEF to the disaster had been relevant, appropriate, to some extent effective (intervention coverage was variable) and relatively efficient, with some major outcomes meeting a number of the anticipated results of the Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies. There was strong coherence among programmes that were part of the response, and there are good prospects for the sustainability of several key interventions. Given the lack of experience in responding to a large-scale emergency, the UNICEF Pacific Islands country programme has done well overall, and has excelled in some areas. Nevertheless, the crisis highlights significant weaknesses in the programme's existing capacity to respond to large-scale emergencies in the Pacific. Its preparedness for future disasters and its response to the ongoing disaster in Solomon Islands need to be strengthened.

55. The evaluation provided recommendations to address the gaps and constraints: retain, for the short term, a strong presence in the affected areas; undertake a vulnerability needs assessment and a mapping exercise to locate communities in need of support; engage proactively on HIV and child protection issues; review staff safety; and provide training in sea survival skills. It recommended that, over the following year, a health and nutrition baseline survey be undertaken and efforts be made to streamline supply and financial procedures. Another set of recommendations was developed to guide implementation during future emergencies, including the establishment of clear performance benchmarks and reporting mechanisms for procurement and delivery of supplies, prepositioning of

supplies, and mapping and pre-identifying preferred transport options against various scenarios.

Evaluation of early childhood care and education programmes in Cambodia

56. The evaluation examined the effectiveness of different childhood care and education (ECCE) programmes in Cambodia promoting children's preparedness for school, and recommended strategies that would contribute to their improved effectiveness, sustainability and expansion. Four different programme types were assessed: state preschools, private preschools, community preschools and home-based programmes. The vast majority of the children are enrolled in the state preschools.

57. Despite the low enrolment rate of 28 per cent, there is a strong demand for ECCE in Cambodia. Children who participated in early childhood programmes had significantly better developmental functioning than children in the control group. Children in state preschools had significantly better functioning at pre-test and post-test than children in the other three groups. No significant differences were found between children in community preschools and home-based programmes.

58. Community-based ECCE programmes have been successful in achieving positive outcomes, not only for children and their families, but also for the wider community. Given the momentum that exists, effective investment at this time should result in ECCE programmes becoming acknowledged as integral to community development.

59. Positive spin-off effects of enrolment in early childhood programmes include on-time enrolment in grade 1 and lower rates of grade retention in the primary grades. Further, children's attendance in ECCE programmes may bring about family involvement and community participation in early childhood learning.

60. Given the objectively measured beneficial effects of ECCE on the development of young children, the evaluation made a number of recommendations: continue efforts to create demand for ECCE; increase low-cost or no-cost access and enrolment by providing services close to where the child lives; and encourage enrolment of children at an early age, preferably before they are four. While children benefit most from government-run ECCE programmes with trained teachers, where this is not feasible for reasons of human and financial resources, community-based or home-based programmes are a valuable alternative.

61. It will be necessary to increase government funding for ECCE programmes, while community involvement is crucial for the sustainability of the ECCE activities. UNICEF should focus on strengthening community capacities to deliver quality ECCE services and advocate with the Government for additional resource allocations for service expansion and teacher training.

Eastern and Southern Africa

Evaluation of the project on improvement of household food security and *woreda* [district] integrated basic services in the Oromia and Tigray regions in Ethiopia

62. Well in advance of the current worldwide food price increase, UNICEF has been supporting the Government of Ethiopia since 2001 to improve household food security in the Oromia and Tigray regions through the 'Improvement of household

food security and *woreda* integrated basic services' project funded by the Belgian Survival Fund (BSF/WIBS). An evaluation of BSF/WIBS, conducted in 2007, concluded that the most effective elements were the household microfinance and revolving livestock funds, the construction of educational and health facilities, and the training and awareness-raising of Government and programme staff, health workers, teachers, and community members. The evaluation detected improvements in quantitative indicators of food security, health, and water access. In addition to building administrative capacity at the local level, qualitative interviews and focus group discussions indicated that the BSF/WIBS programme instilled a strong sense of ownership, optimism, and self-sufficiency within the community.

63. The evaluation recommended that future project activities be prioritized by the communities in order of their perceived importance. It also emphasized the urgent need to develop a strong monitoring information system for the next phase of the project. The prevention and mitigation of shocks due to recurrent droughts, which affect the project implementation, should be taken into account in the design of all food security interventions in the future. To ensure sustainability, the evaluation recommended that community-based nutrition be implemented as part of the health extension programme of the Ministry of Health, with continued attention paid to household food security in partnership with the Food Security Bureau of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

64. The findings and recommendations from this evaluation are already being used to design the community-based nutrition component of the Ethiopian National Nutrition Programme, formulated by the Government in 2007. The National Nutrition Programme now places significant emphasis on building a community-led system of identifying and referring malnourished children through community dialogue, facilitated by volunteer community health workers and supportive supervision by service providers and local government officials. The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development are already deliberating on how to implement community-based nutrition within the health extension programme, as recommended by the evaluation. Thus, the evaluation provided the evidence needed for a welcome strategic shift in implementation approach towards integration as part of a high-impact package.

Evaluation of the joint United Nations Emergency Health, Nutrition and HIV/AIDS programme in North and North Eastern Uganda

65. Conflict due to the Lord's Resistance Army insurgency and cattle rustling in Northern Uganda has resulted in internal displacement of the population, insecurity and breakdown of health and socioeconomic infrastructures. The United Nations Emergency Health, Nutrition and HIV/AIDS programme in North and North Eastern Uganda — a joint programme of UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Word Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) — started in January 2006, with funding from the Department of International Development (DFID) of the Government of the United Kingdom.

66. An evaluation of this joint United Nations programme was conducted in July and August 2007, to identify early programme effects, unmet short-term humanitarian needs and key opportunities and challenges. The methods used during this evaluation were interviews with stakeholders and document review.

67. The programme increased childhood immunization, vitamin A supplementation and deworming coverage. However, progress on improvements in health infrastructure has been relatively slow. Acute malnutrition rates have fallen below the emergency threshold of 10 per cent, but have increased in return areas in some districts. There have been significant improvements in access to services for prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV. However, the evaluation found limited evidence of scale-up in adolescent health, emergency obstetric care or sexual and gender-based violence services.

68. The evaluation highlighted both benefits and challenges associated with joint United Nations programming. The joint programme helped to clarify United Nations agency mandates, determine appropriate roles (based on comparative advantage), improve communication and strengthen joint planning. However, the joint programming increased transaction costs for the United Nations agencies, since considerable time was required for joint planning and proposal development. Differences in planning cycles, operational procedures and reporting systems were also noted as challenges.

69. The evaluation recommended that the United Nations should work closely with the Ugandan Ministry of Health to develop and implement additional innovative approaches to address shortages of specific cadres of personnel, while putting an emphasis on the provision of emergency obstetric care at all level 3 health centres, and on community education on nutrition, use of insecticide-treated mosquito nets, family planning, and HIV prevention. The Joint United Nations programme should also plan ahead to hand over responsibility for the health management information system and emergency preparedness and response to the district governments in Northern Uganda.

70. The findings and recommendations of the evaluation helped shape the UNICEF planning and response for the remainder of the country programme (2008-2009) in Northern Uganda. The programme will be more closely aligned with the Uganda child survival strategy, making a transition from humanitarian relief to recovery by strengthening the capacity of the health delivery system. UNICEF is working together with the other three United Nations agencies to develop a joint proposal to support the Ministry of Health in this way.

Middle East and North Africa

Evaluation of training and capacity-building activities undertaken between 2003 and 2006 by the UNICEF Morocco country office

71. The evaluation of the Morocco country office covered a large sample of training activities that were delivered through all UNICEF-supported programmes, such as education, health, support to children in rural settings, as well as monitoring the Convention on the Rights of the Child and child protection projects. It examined the relevance, quality and impact of the training activities supported by UNICEF and aimed at drawing lessons and providing recommendations to improve the capacity-building component of future programmes, particularly for the period 2007-2011.

72. The evaluation highlighted the main strengths and weaknesses of the training component in the previous cooperation cycle 2002-2006. One of the strengths identified by this evaluation was that training encouraged the introduction of

improvements, innovations and new practices, and also supported the success of the pilot projects initiated as part of the programme. Shortfalls included the lack of coordination among the different programmes supported by UNICEF and the lack of a monitoring and evaluation system to track training results and their impact on the quality of the programme.

73. The main conclusions drawn from the evaluation related to capacity-building and training strategy, recommending that there should be a more systematic focus on supporting decentralization and consolidating the capacities provided by local and regional partners. Also, training should be part of the planning exercise in order to devote sufficient time to needs assessment, identification of the training audience, expected results and the development of a monitoring and evaluation system to track results of the training and to follow up on training workshops in the field.

Evaluation of the female genital mutilation/cutting abandonment programme undertaken by the UNICEF Egypt country office

74. The female genital mutilation/cutting (FGC) abandonment programme seeks to contribute to the national dialogue on FGC, promote regional exchanges, and support non-governmental initiatives to prevent FGC at the subnational level. It is based on the 'positive deviance' approach, which focuses on identifying individuals within local communities who chose not to practice FGC, and builds on their experiences to encourage other community members to abandon the practice. It is implemented in 40 communities in four governorates in Upper Egypt, in partnership with four partner non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and with the support of 20 local NGOs at the community level.

75. The evaluation of the FGC abandonment programme was piloted by UNICEF in partnership with the Centre for Population and Development Activities. It examined the implementation and results of project activities and interventions of the FGC abandonment programme in three key areas: programme relevance; effectiveness; and efficiency. The methodology of the evaluation was mainly qualitative analysis (interviews; focus group discussions; and case studies), supplemented by an analysis of project documents.

76. The evaluation revealed that the programme is criticized for ignoring more pressing community needs, such as poverty and unemployment, and focusing on an issue that many community members do not feel is equally relevant to their needs. Thus, it recommended that the message on FGC should be part of larger awareness activities related to hygiene, health, nutrition or child care, and that a service provision component be integrated into the project. Additional recommendations included counselling for women who went through FGC with regard to problems in sexual marital relationships (preferably together with their husbands); educating different groups in the community and sensitizing them to FGC issues; building capacity within the community; and developing partnerships with NGOs at governorate and community levels and with the Government in order to establish open communal dialogue on this once-taboo issue.

South Asia

Evaluation of the joint United Nations response to the tsunami in India

77. The evaluation of the United Nations response to the tsunami in India covered both programme results and the experience of the United Nations team for Tsunami Recovery Support (UNTRS) in running a joint recovery operation following the Indian Ocean tsunami of 26 December 2004. The recovery framework included 11 joint projects, with a lead United Nations agency for each one. The UNTRS spent about $46 million on this operation over the last three years, of which 60 per cent came from UNICEF funding.

78. UNTRS has put inclusive recovery at the heart of its advocacy work. Recruitment delays may have reduced the potential impact of UNTRS on the reconstruction process, especially in relation to shelter and the environment, but less so with regard to health and education. In Tamil Nadu, initiatives in relation to child rights and improved education and health services, especially with regard to HIV/AIDS, have been more successful than initiatives related to sanitation, livelihoods, and the environment.

79. Though very well conceived and generally well supported in India, it has proven challenging for the UNTRS to operationalize the concept of 'delivering as one'. There should be a greater commitment to institute simple but rigorous common planning, monitoring, and reporting systems in any future joint United Nations recovery operation. The report also recommends that donors should support the overall operation and not earmark their donations to specific projects when the United Nations is 'delivering as one' in the joint response to the tsunami.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Evaluation of the Ecuador country programme

80. The Ecuador country programme evaluation was conducted in 2007 by the Facultad Latinoamerica de Ciencias Sociales (Latin American Faculty for Social Sciences), a regional academic institution, which also has an office in Ecuador. The evaluation, representing an important advance in national ownership and capacity development in evaluation, was supported by the evaluation office and the regional office, with the full cooperation of the country office.

81. The UNICEF country programme 2004-2008, with its midterm review in 2006, had been developed within an unstable national context. In 2007, the new Government came to power on the basis of a strong social movement and an agenda for pro-poor policies, national sovereignty, and social mobilization. The country programme evaluation thus provided a critical input into the strategic repositioning of UNICEF in a radically different political situation.

82. The Ecuador country programme for 2004-2008 focused on advocacy and public policies. Given the lack of consistent government leadership during the earlier period, UNICEF played an important role in giving children's issues a high profile in national debate and policy dialogue. The UNICEF role in bringing together national actors of differing and sometimes conflicting standpoints is also documented. The evaluation showed that, during the 1990s and this decade, UNICEF played a key role in providing continuity to social policy initiatives, to institutional and policy strengthening, to networks, and to instilling an awareness of

and commitment to rights among key sectors of the population, resulting in advances in institutional and policy development.

83. Increased and consistent attention needs to be given to the implementation, operationalization and management of national policies, especially at the local levels. The country programme evaluation reports that the success achieved at the national policy level did not translate into results for children in the municipalities. The report notes the challenge of achieving these outcomes in the most excluded regions, where capacities are weakest and the reach of the national Government is also very weak. A special effort is required at the local level to reach the poorest in line with national policies.

84. The country programme evaluation was followed by a management response, which was immediately used for enhancing the UNICEF-supported country programme. By 2007, some 19 agreements on child rights had been reached at the provincial level, and 76 cantonal councils and 12 cantonal boards for child protection were established. The findings of the country programme evaluation are also an important input for the formulation of the UNICEF one-year bridging programme for 2009 and for the overall policy work of UNICEF.

Local governance and the rights of children and adolescents — an analysis of experiences in seven countries

85. The joint UNICEF-UNDP study on local governance and the rights of children and adolescents synthesizes experiences with the purpose of sharing good practices and tools for achieving children's rights and the Millennium Development Goals at the local level. Experiences were documented in seven countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic and El Salvador.

86. The study is based on evaluations and assessments of several of the country experiences, and clearly describes the prerequisites for successful local mechanisms for addressing children's rights within the Latin American and Caribbean context. The inter-agency study analyzed seven local-level experiences with strategies and interventions for putting children's rights as a priority, and identified four key conditions for establishing good local governance based on child rights.

87. First, local governments require a strategic vision for developing long-term plans based on children's rights, with concretely defined results. Second, effective decentralization and some form of local autonomy tend to be more effective than depending on the political willingness to act on children's rights only. Third, for long-term action towards children and adolescents, it is important to develop regular dialogue among local political leaders and representatives from civil society, for example, by establishing municipal working groups and, based on such dialogue, obtaining concrete commitments from all parts of society to put children's rights at the top of the local agenda. The fourth condition for a sustained approach is the participation of the population, especially of children and adolescents, in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of local action.

88. Another key finding of the study was that a fully transparent and credible certification process for local governments proves to be an important incentive for sustaining results towards full realization of children's rights at the local level.

89. This study proved to be instrumental in demonstrating good practices of governance based on child rights concepts at the local level, concretizing the theory

with some real experiences. Documenting and analyzing the seven examples in the study also enhances the learning across the region on the identified conditions for successfully achieving local-level action and results for children.

Western and Central Africa

Evaluation of the trafficking and child protection programme in West Africa

90. Funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) from 2004 to 2007, the programme supported efforts aimed at child protection and the fight against child trafficking at regional and national levels, with a particular focus on Burkina Faso, Mali and Nigeria.

91. The findings of the evaluation highlight the important role of WCARO in the programme: providing country offices with technical assistance; organizing regional activities, and acting as a main hub of expertise with regard to macro-policy issues. The evaluation emphasizes the importance of the regional child protection strategy as a shift away from projects and programmes focusing on specific categories of vulnerability, towards a more comprehensive strategy focusing on the creation of protective environments for all children.

92. The findings suggest that interception and return, as practiced in the Burkina Faso and Mali programmes, are not always effective, and highlight the need for a stronger reintegration component. It is recommended to conduct a study on the determinants for child relocation in order to better target children at risk and to define more appropriate reinsertion and reintegration components.

93. The evaluation was not able to measure the impact of the programme on trafficking victims, since there was no appropriate follow-up. It recommends a tracing study of children and youth who have participated in the programme, to determine its impact and effectiveness.

94. As part of the follow-up to the recommendations of this evaluation, WCARO will ensure that the three country programmes implement their specific recommendations in order to improve the current programmes. Furthermore, WCARO is leading a strategic reflection and reframing process on how child protection is best approached and conceptualized. The programmatic shift and focus away from categories of vulnerability towards the creation of a protective environment for all children is groundbreaking. The programmes combating child trafficking should be recast into a broader framework, which acknowledges the right of children and youth to mobility.

95. A similar evaluation is being finalized for an anti-trafficking programme supported by the Government of Belgium and implemented in four countries: Ghana, Mali, Niger and Togo. Plans are underway for a synthesis of both evaluations at the country level as well as at the regional level, in order to maximize the use of the findings and recommendations and to share experiences with other countries in the region.

Evaluation of the joint project on educating adolescents for local and community development in Mauritania

96. Girls' education is a main priority in Mauritania. In 2002, it saw the launch of a joint project titled 'Educating adolescents for local and community development',

which focused on improving the transition of girls from primary schooling to secondary education and also on increasing their retention rates, to eventually empower girls and increase their participation in community and social development.

97. The project was a joint effort by five United Nations country team organizations — UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and WHO — together with the Mauritanian Government. Activities, covering four regions, were distributed among the different agencies. The final evaluation of the project was commissioned and funded by UNICEF in strong collaboration with the other four agencies involved.

98. Findings show that quantitative objectives of increasing girls' access, retention, and success rates in secondary education have been achieved, although retention rates have not increased significantly. Best results have been achieved in terms of support to transportation, infrastructure and improvement of school life, and development of school curricula. However, the results achieved have not led to the empowerment of girls or to an increase in their contribution to community development.

99. Social mobilization campaigns have provided ample knowledge of the social and cultural obstacles to girls' education, as well as potential solutions. Through these campaigns, the targeted communities have acquired relevant knowledge on reproductive health and life skills, which is likely to contribute to the empowerment of girls.

100. The evaluation recommended strengthening coordination among partners and ensuring the integration of the project into the overall country programme and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The project should go to scale by focusing on teacher qualifications; school infrastructures and equipment; mobilization of funds for transportation through income-generating activities; and establishing hygiene, health and environmental clubs. The evaluation underlined the importance of ensuring strong community ownership when planning the initiatives.

101. An inter-agency consultation was organized on the evaluation recommendations. The recommendations of the evaluation have been endorsed, and tasks and responsibilities have been distributed among the five agencies. Discussions and advocacy to define scaling-up strategies continue, and partners are planning to incrementally include new regions in the programme. However, the main goal is to get all parts of the Government fully involved and to integrate the project into the sector plan and its budget mechanisms.

B. Global level

Delivering as One

102. At the request of the Chief Executives Board of the United Nations system, the UNEG has initiated an evaluation of the processes and results related to the United Nations pilots of the Delivering as One initiative. The UNICEF Evaluation Office

co-chairs the management group of the heads of evaluation offices in UNEG[9] and plays an important coordinating role.

103. In the initial phase, between November 2007 and May 2008, the basic parameters for the evaluation of the pilots were defined, in close consultation with national partners, and evaluability studies were conducted in the eight Delivering as One pilot countries,[10] focussing on technical assessments of the design of the pilots and the mechanisms put in place for implementing the reforms.

104. The evaluability assessments have identified both process and substantive parameters that may guide evaluations in the future. Process indicators include national ownership and leadership; challenges related to system-wide inclusiveness; reduction of transaction cost; support from headquarters and from the regional level; and the 'Four Ones' (one programme; one leader; one budgetary framework; one office). Substantive parameters for an evaluation include relevance (uniqueness of the role and contribution of the United Nations system; strategic intent; responsiveness to national needs and priorities) and effectiveness (achievement of results at output; outcome and impact levels; adequacy of planning, monitoring and evaluation tools).

105. All the studies conducted in the eight countries suggest that national ownership and leadership are strong and that there is an alignment with national policies and strategies. Pilot countries now have more access to the full range of mandates, resources and expertise that can be made available by the United Nations system, including by non-resident agencies.

106. In all countries, efforts are made to better articulate the strategic intent of the United Nations system in vision statements describing the unique role and contribution of the United Nations system, based on its common comparative advantage. Logical links that relate focus areas and joint programmes to this common strategic intent are developed for the 'One Programme'. Frameworks for results-based management and monitoring and evaluation are also being developed. These improvements will make the pilots fully suited for evaluations, allowing for an assessment of the relevance and effectiveness of the role and contribution of the United Nations system.

107. The 'One Budgetary Framework' and the 'One Fund' are useful tools for the mobilization of resources that are required for the implementation of the 'One Programme' and subjacent joint programmes. The management of these resources is still hampered by diverse administrative and financial procedures in funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system. These challenges require a greater degree of simplification and harmonization of

[9] The members of the UNEG Management Group are the Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, UNDP, the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs; the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements; the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNICEF, the United Nations Fund for Women, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Food Programme and WHO.

[10] The eight pilot countries are Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam.

business practices in the United Nations system as a whole. The bottlenecks need to be documented as carefully as possible.

108. In all pilot countries, there are plans to further rationalize the country presence, for instance, through co-location of resident organizations in one office. Attempts are made to reduce transaction cost through common shared support services (procurement; security; information technology; telecommunications). However, it is observed that no systematic data collection and analysis is in place to monitor and compare costs incurred before and during the pilots, which will make it difficult at a later stage to assess the reduction of transaction cost that is the result of the Delivering as One approach. There is also no clarity as to how savings on operational costs can be ploughed back into programme funding.

Programming priorities and operational strategies of the MTSP for 2006-2009

N.B. Annex 1 provides a status report on evaluations related to the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (IMEF) from the medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) 2006-2009.

Evaluation of gender policy implementation in UNICEF

109. The evaluation of gender policy implementation in UNICEF was carried out between April and December 2007. A conference room paper concerning the planned follow-up action by UNICEF, together with an extensive summary of conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation, was made available to the Executive Board during the 2008 Annual Session (E/ICEF/2008/CRP.12). Building on existing achievements, the follow-up plan addresses the evaluation recommendations, focusing on improvements in a number of key areas: policy; strategy; accountability; staffing and gender expertise; capacity-building and training; development programme; integrating gender within an emergency context; financing gender mainstreaming; United Nations coherence; and engagement with partners.

110. The Executive Board decision 2008/10 requests UNICEF, inter alia, to present to the first regular session of 2009 a management response to all recommendations of the evaluation, including actions and timeframes for compliance, and to develop a tracking and monitoring framework to measure progress in implementation.

Tsunami evaluation

111. UNICEF has devised a comprehensive evaluation portfolio for its $657 million tsunami-response programme, covering eight countries in three regions and involving all MTSP focus areas. The portfolio has been devised to improve accountability and learning, while demonstrating the results achieved for children and women during the emergency, recovery and early development phases, and also to identify what more needs to be done to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in tsunami-affected areas.

112. UNICEF played a lead role in the steering committee of the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition, contributing to five inter-agency evaluations in tsunami-affected countries, completed in 2005-2006. In addition, UNICEF conducted independent evaluations of the response in Indonesia, Maldives and Sri Lanka. Published in May 2006, the report, *The 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami Disaster:*

Evaluation of the UNICEF Response (Emergency and Initial Recovery Phase), included evaluation reports for Indonesia, Maldives and Sri Lanka, and a synthesis report for all affected countries. These reports were disseminated, together with the management response to recommendations from the three country evaluations.

113. The tsunami-related evaluation shifted focus, in 2007, towards preparing an impact assessment of the UNICEF response to the tsunami, using a three-phase process: comprehensive document review; evaluability assessment; and impact evaluation. Document reviews were completed for India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand, to identify the areas directly and indirectly affected, to review available data, and to develop indicators for pre-tsunami and post-tsunami periods. The first 'evaluability' assessment focused on Maldives, since it will be the first country undergoing an impact evaluation. The assessment, which commenced in 2007, analyzed programmatic logic, reviewed available data with respect to country programme activities and provided recommendations on the timing and scope of the impact evaluation. The evaluability assessment also included a limited programme review, which yielded recommendations for further improvements in programme implementation.

114. Based on programming experience in Indonesia, Madagascar and Maldives, a lessons-learned review of UNICEF construction programmes aimed to inform UNICEF construction policy and guidelines. The review concluded with two major findings: (a) construction has been appropriately used as a powerful tool around which to build emergency response and recovery programmes; and (b) learning-by-doing, especially in the case of large-scale construction programmes, has demanded an extreme level of effort on the part of country offices. Two major recommendations emerged: (a) formulating a policy on construction is necessary to clarify the position and role of UNICEF on construction; and (b) establishing and disseminating guidelines would help country offices in their decision-making and risk-management through each step of the project cycle.

Humanitarian action

Inter-agency real-time evaluation of the response to the cyclone and floods of February 2007 in Mozambique

115. The real-time evaluation commissioned by a group of IASC agencies concluded that the response was successful overall, due to effective coordination and preparedness by the Government of Mozambique, the leadership role played by the UNICEF country office and other United Nations agencies, and the positive impact of the humanitarian reforms. The real needs for emergency relief were largely met for the populations affected by the cyclone and the floods.

116. The success of the emergency operation can be attributed directly to the high level of preparedness. The National Institute for Disaster Management of Mozambique provided strong national coordination. The emergency response clearly demonstrated that the disaster preparedness particularly with regard to the floods, paid off at both the community and the agency levels. Emergency response plans should be flexible and strategic in the selection of the supplies to be distributed.

117. The cluster structure offered a set of coherent and predictable points of contact for the Government with the international community; and a predictable interface

for agencies deploying into the country. The introduction of the cluster approach was uneven, but it did add to the quality of the response. Not all cluster leads had a presence in the field, limiting their ability to capture information from the field level or to support coordinated action. It was notable that the clusters regarded as the most successful had seen a large investment by the cluster leads.

118. CERF helped to ensure a rapid response, and coordinated a larger programme of assistance than would otherwise have been possible. The poor support for both the appeal launched by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the United Nations Flash Appeal suggests that, without CERF, relief funds would have been significantly less, especially in the first month of the response. However, agencies need to prepare their CERF requests faster. NGOs appreciated the inclusive way in which UNICEF led the clusters, developed the CERF proposals and used partner cooperation agreements to rapidly disburse funding, even before CERF funds were received.

119. UNICEF was designated cluster lead for nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene, and it shared leadership of the education and child protection clusters with the Save the Children Alliance. UNICEF was able to respond effectively due to a number of factors: the range of emergency experience of the Mozambique country team, adequate investment in preparedness and staff skills, strong links with the government administration and with NGOs, and a participative and inclusive manner of managing the cluster lead. The evaluation commended the internal review of the emergency response by UNICEF as a positive example of quality control, providing essential information for improving future performance as cluster leads.

Organizational performance

Strategic review of human resource management in UNICEF

120. Seeking to evaluate how well UNICEF is managing and enhancing its human resource capacity to reach its strategic objectives, the review was conducted between November 2005 and July 2006, and comprised four phases: (a) inception and rapid assessment, to quickly examine human resources management in UNICEF; (b) diagnosis, via a global staff survey and interviews and focus groups at the regional and country level in MENA, ROSA, WCARO and TACRO, and in New York; (c) strategic frameworks, building on the seven strategic levers of change for unblocking the human resources system of UNICEF so that deep and lasting change could be achieved; and (d) implementation, designed to kick-start the implementation of the levers of change.

121. The review found that while most staff were highly committed to the goal of UNICEF of helping the world's children and women, many were dissatisfied with the working environment. Internal UNICEF procedures, it noted, were characterized by significant levels of financial and other controls; risk was therefore managed to the point that it could possibly be stifling creativity and innovation, as well as emphasizing input-driven budgets to the detriment of programme delivery.

122. The review recommended that UNICEF adopt a framework for human resource management centred on line managers being accountable for managing people and performance. UNICEF should shift paradigms from 'control through budgets and bureaucracy' to one of 'strategy and policy frameworks, accountability, results and envelopes of resources'.

123. The review recommended the application of seven 'levers of change': (a) strengthening the roles and responsibilities of line managers; (b) effectively dealing with chronic underperformance; (c) developing a staffing strategy flexible enough to meet the organization's changing needs; (d) adopting a strategic approach to the management and development of talent; (e) strengthening, simplifying and aligning human resources management processes; (f) developing the Division of Human Resources and its professional human resources network as a strategic partner of senior management; and (g) reforming resource allocation processes to empower line managers, within clear frameworks.

124. A management response was produced in November 2006 through an Implementation Group chaired by the Deputy Executive Director (Operations) and supported by the Division of Human Resources. Additional funding has been provided to start implementation of the recommendations.

Evaluation of the supply function of UNICEF

125. The evaluation of the supply function of UNICEF assessed the efficiency, effectiveness and added value of services provided by the Supply Division, as well as the impact on children's access to essential goods, through supplies to programme countries, and the capacity-building of Governments. The evaluation focused on five pre-selected categories of supply products, and was conducted between May and November 2006. Eight country visits involved desk-based research and document reviews, quantitative and qualitative information gathering.

126. The evaluation concluded that the essential commodities supplied by UNICEF are providing a range of benefits for children, although it was not clear whether UNICEF is targeting the poorest of the poor through its supply function. The UNICEF supply chain has significant weaknesses in supply planning and in on-time delivery. In general, there is an absence of supply performance monitoring, and it is difficult to effectively manage or oversee the whole UNICEF supply chain and to deliver significant performance improvements. As it is likely that, in the future, UNICEF will receive more requests for assistance in building supply capacity, it will need to revise its approach and dedicate more resources to the supply function.

127. UNICEF procurement services are appreciated, when they are well-focused, and have potential for growth. UNICEF is not equipped to properly assess and understand the difference supplies make, as reflected by the agency's underinvestment in monitoring and evaluation.

Annex

Status of evaluations planned and conducted during 2006-2007

This annex covers all items contained in Annex 2 of the MTSP, all evaluations directly managed by the Evaluation Office, and a selection of important additional global-level evaluations.

The status of the evaluations is rated in the following ways:

Pending: still considered relevant but no action has been taken;

Mobilization: Terms of Reference finalized or under design; human and financial resources being gathered;

Implementation: field work underway or complete; analysis in process;

Completed: final report delivered; dissemination underway;

Superseded: original emphasis has shifted to a modified, higher priority;

Cancelled: removed from the active list for any given reason.

Evaluation title	Status as of March 2008	Comment
Evaluations and research listed in MTSP Annex 2: The Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (IMEF)		
1. The UNICEF contribution to improved infant and young child feeding[1]	mobilization	
2. Quality assessment of community-based ECD centres[1]	mobilization	
3. Impact of child-friendly schools[1]	implementation	
4. Life-skills education and HIV/AIDS transmission[1]	completed	includes assembling experiences of multiple agency partners.
5. Impact of psychosocial support in emergencies programming[1]	completed	changed emphasis to a monitoring and evaluation manual for use in resilience programmes.
6. Impact of children's participation on UNICEF policies/programming[1]	mobilization	
7. Parenting programming effects[2]	implementation	originally scheduled as research; has become a series of country-level evaluations.
8. Impact and systemic requirements of school fee abolition[2]	completed	
9. Impact of suppressive antiretroviral therapy on breast-feeding[2]	implementation	joint with WHO.
10. Country programme strategic lessons learned review (formerly country programme in national plans)[2]	superseded completed	originally 'child protection in national development plans'; changed to a meta-evaluation with far more rigorous analysis.
11. Methods to measure advocacy impact[2]	Pending	
12. UNICEF participation in budget processes for children (sector-wide approach: to development assistance; poverty-reduction strategy; etc.)[3]	Pending	
13. Effectiveness of child-to-child programmes[3]	implementation	has become a six-country operational research project focused on early child development and school readiness.
14. Corporate performance in gender mainstreaming[3]	Completed	

[1] Originally scheduled as a programmatic evaluation in MTSP IMEF, defined as an evaluation "to determine if a programming strategy central to MTSP success has an evidence basis of impact or is being implemented with high levels of effectiveness".

[2] Originally scheduled as a research theme in the MTSP IMEF, defined as "knowledge-building efforts important for developing effective future strategies, will include rigorous efforts to assess lessons learned by other partners".

[3] Originally scheduled as a corporate-level topical evaluation in the MTSP IMEF, defined as an evaluation "to determine if a cross-cutting programme theme is successful".

15. Corporate performance in humanitarian response[3]	completed	
16. Strategic review of UNICEF human resource management[4]	completed	
17. The UNICEF supply function[4]	completed	
18. UNICEF programme management guidelines/procedures/systems[4]	superseded	overtaken by organizational review and assessment of UNICEF business practices.
Selection of additional corporate level topical evaluations, including humanitarian crisis		
19. UNICEF support to mine action	completed	final title is 'Global Evaluation of Mine Risk Education'.
20. Management and technical quality of the multiple indicator cluster survey	implementation	
21. Global evaluation of UNICEF flagship publications	implementation	
22. The accelerated child survival and development programme	implementation	two phases completed; third phase nearing completion.
24. Real-time evaluation: Niger nutrition crisis	completed	carryover from 2005.
25. Real-time evaluation: Pakistan earthquake	completed	carryover from 2005; conducted jointly with other United Nations agencies.
26. Real-time evaluation: Pakistan floods	completed	conducted jointly with other United Nations agencies.
27. Real-time evaluation: Mozambique floods	completed	
28. Transition to impact: literature review and evaluability assessment	completed	four tsunami-affected country studies; another study is underway for mid-2008 completion.
29. How to respond better: policy implications arising from evaluation findings on the international response to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami	completed	synthesizes lessons of numerous country-level and regional-level tsunami evaluations conducted in 2005-2006.
30. A lessons learned review of UNICEF construction programmes in tsunami-affected areas	implementation	estimated completion date is second quarter of 2008.
Selection of additional organizational performance evaluations		
31. Review of UNICEF partnerships with civil society organizations	Completed	
Note: items 14, 16, and 17 in the MTSP IMEF list above are organizational performance evaluations.		

[4] Originally scheduled as an operational effectiveness evaluation, defined as an evaluation "to determine if the organization is internally efficient".